

**CLARK HAYS**

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September 7, 1999

Ms. Jane Henney,  
Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration  
HF-1  
56000 Fisher's Lane  
Room 1471  
Rockville, MD 20857

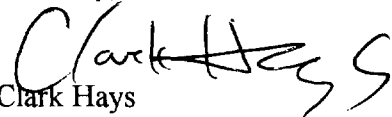
Dear Ms. Henney,

I am writing to express my concerns over the emergence of genetically modified foods and the, thus far, inability of consumers to distinguish between traditional foods and these new genetically altered hybrids. As I am sure you are all too familiar with the issue (given the extensive media coverage of late), I will not attempt to debate individual pro's and con's. But justifications of agribusiness aside, the ethical issues (i.e., animal genes introduced into vegetable DNA and what this means to vegetarians or certain religious interests), increased allergic sensitivities (as evidenced by the reaction of individuals to the Brazil nut gene recently introduced into soybeans), and more subtle forms of health concerns that may not make themselves known for many years (as indicated by the unwillingness of laboratory animals to eat genetically altered foods) seem like enough incentives to take a stand for consumer's rights. Judging by the amount of play this issue has received in the media, the average consumer (as well as organic farmers whose crops are being tainted by neighboring fields of genetically altered crops) is quite concerned.

I urge you to look upon this concern as a mandate from the public and enact regulatory laws that require manufacturers to label their products, when appropriate, as genetically modified. If consumers are allowed to make informed choices, I am quite sure that the agribusiness attempt to introduce genetically modified foods would quickly lose steam, suffering in the marketplace. At the very least, it would create enough time to allow for extensive testing to verify that genetically altered foods have no long-term effects.

I appreciate your taking the time to read this, and would like to simply repeat my claim that consumers deserve full disclosure when it comes to the foods that they eat. Anything else smacks of an anti-public conspiracy. Please help ensure that this basic right is met.

Sincerely,

  
Clark Hays

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